

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION #23  
Wednesday, January 26, 2005**

A work session of the Williamsburg Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, January 26, 2005, at 3:00 p.m., in Conference Room 3A, Williamsburg Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street.

**ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER**

Present were Commissioners Young, Hertzler, McBeth and Rose. Absent were Commissioners Pons, Friend and Smith. Also present were Planning Director Nester and Zoning Administrator Murphy.

Mr. Young called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**OPEN FORUM**

Henry Coleman, 606 College Terrace, addressed the Richmond Road corridor from Brooks Street to the Williamsburg Shopping Center. He said he was concerned with the residential character of the area, and did not want to see it change to more of a business orientation. He said that any zoning changes should keep in mind the fact that the area is an ideal residential location for people who enjoy City amenities. He expressed concern about having the office area becoming available for uses other than offices.

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue, suggested leaving the LBR side of Richmond Road alone. He said the Commission should make decisions that strengthen the neighborhood and encourage owner-occupancy, and said that any new residential uses should be majority owner-occupied.

John Digges, 512 South Henry Street, noted that housing along Richmond Road will probably stay that way. He said that Suter's Furniture is a wonderful adaptive re-use. He said that the area that needs the most tinkering with is the street behind Richmond Road – there is a lot of junk there.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Nester said that this work session would be devoted to commercial (and related residential) issues.

Richmond Road between Brooks Street and Williamsburg Shopping Center

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated Mixed Use land use on south side of Richmond Road from Brooks Street to Williamsburg Shopping Center, and Office land use

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on north side from Brooks Street to Westover Avenue. He outlined two choices for the commercial component for this area: (1) continue the present land use scheme, which calls for a more limited Mixed Use area on the south side of Richmond Road from Brooks Street to Williamsburg Shopping Center; and leave Office land use on the north side from Brooks to Westover; or (2) create a unified Mixed Use land use area on both sides of Richmond Road from Brooks Street to Matoaka Court on the south side, and the Brooks Street to Bacon Avenue on the north side (and including lots on the east side of Bacon Avenue and the west side of Westover Avenue. This would be more limited than the existing B-3 and more flexible than the existing LBR, and would be similar in intent to the LB-1 District in the City Square area. Mr. Nester also outlined two choices for the residential component: (1) continue the present Mixed Use/Office land use scheme with the existing densities (14 units/net acre for the present B-3 area, and 8 units/net acre for the LBR area) – potential for 18 dwelling units; or (2) create a unified Mixed Use area, with a density of 14 units/net acre with a special use permit – potential for 35 dwelling units.

Mr. Rose questioned how these changes fit into the broader picture of the future of the City – what kind of City do we want to have.

Mr. Hertzler said that buildings that were once desirable may become class B and C offices, and asked if this area could become more of a residential area? He said that the residential area behind the office strip needs to be protected, and commercial use could pose more problems. What are we doing to protect this area? There is a potential for the area to decline.

Mr. Nester reiterated that the major charge to the staff and Commission is to do the right and proper thing for this area.

Mr. Young said that “first you do no harm.”

Mr. Rose said that we were on the right track in trying to unify the area.

Mr. Digges said that much of the property is at the end of its economic use, and that a tremendous amount of money must be spent to upgrade properties.

Mr. Kranbuehl heartily disagreed. He said that there was not a problem with uniformity in the LB-2 District, and said that uses needed to be listed. He said that any residential use above shops should need a special use permit. He questioned why the Southern Inn property was proposed as B-2 instead of LB-2. He said that multifamily uses should require a special use permit.

Mr. Coleman said that we need to consider what we can do to make these attractive area.

Mrs. Alecia Diehl, 900 South Henry Street, asked about the traffic implications of increased density. She also said that any new business uses would also increase traffic. She noted

that Richmond Road is getting uglier and uglier, and said that she likes the idea of going back to more residential use.

Mr. Nester said that the proposed LB-2 uses may need to be more closely drawn, with more uses being considered as special use permit uses.

Mr. Hertzler noted that banks and offices can have a negative impact on residential areas. He said that this area, in some respects, has outlived its economic vitality. He asked again about returning the entire area to residential use – would this increase the economic vitality of the area?

Robert Singley, RJS Associates, 423 North Boundary Street, said that Williamsburg has a small population base, and that for businesses to succeed they need to create a synergy that will create a draw for customers.

Mr. Kranbuehl said that the City needs to require owner-occupancy through a special use permit, and suggested a minimum size for dwelling units.

Mr. Nester suggested a revised proposal that would extend the proposed LB-2 area west to the Master Cleaners property line; delete convenience stores; and make restaurants and retail stores special use permit uses. He said that the boundaries and uses in the B-2 area would need further investigation. There was a consensus of the Commission that this approach was acceptable.

Richmond Road Mixed Use area between Scotland Street and Armistead Avenue (includes Williamsburg Baptist and Williamsburg Presbyterian Churches)

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as Mixed Use land use, and suggested changing this area to Downtown Commercial land use, which would be implemented by the B-1 District, which allows churches as a permitted use. He outlined two choices: (1) no change - leave as Mixed Use land use, now implemented by RDT zoning (LB-1 does not allow churches); or (2) change to Downtown Commercial land use, implemented by B-1 zoning. B-1 allows churches by right (the present RDT requires a special use permit).

There was a short discussion of this area, and it was the consensus of the Commission that changing the area to Downtown Commercial land use, implemented by B-1 zoning, was acceptable.

Kinnamon Townhouse Area

Mr. Nester said this area is now designated as Mixed Use land use, and suggested changing this area to Downtown Commercial land use, implemented by the B-1 District. He said that Kinnamon Townhouses would remain in a PUD zoning district, but noted that the surrounding properties abut Downtown Commercial land use. He outlined two choices: (1)

no change - leave as Mixed Use land use, now implemented by LB-1; or (2) change to Downtown Commercial land use, implemented by B-1 zoning.

There was a discussion of this area, and it was the consensus of the Commission that changing the area to Downtown Commercial land use, implemented by B-1 zoning, was acceptable.

#### Merchants Square/Delly Area/Triangle Block

Mr. Nester said this area is now designated as Downtown Commercial land use, and suggested extending the Downtown Parking Area (which requires no additional parking for development/redevelopment) to cover the Delly area, making it easier to develop and redevelop for student-oriented businesses. He outlined two choices: (1) no change to the Downtown Parking area, requiring the area around the Dellys to meet the standard off-street parking requirements; or (2) recommend extending the Downtown Parking area to include the Delly area, which will not require any additional off-street parking and thereby encourage commercial redevelopment.

There was a discussion of this area. Mr. Hertzler said that anything we can do to encourage redevelopment in this area is good. It was the consensus of the Commission that recommending the extension of the Downtown Parking area to include the Delly area, which will not require any additional off-street parking and thereby encourage commercial redevelopment, was acceptable.

#### Richmond Road from Williamsburg Shopping Center to the Corporate Limits

Mr. Nester said this area is now designated General Business land use from Williamsburg Shopping Center to Bypass Road, and Corridor Commercial land use from Bypass Road to the Corporate Limits. He suggested designating Richmond Road from the Williamsburg Shopping Center to the Corporate Limits as a unified Corridor Commercial land use, to be implemented by the B-2 zoning district, which would need to be modified to allow printing and photocopying shops (Kinkos) and automobile service establishments (Goodyear – possibly with a special use permit). Setback regulations would need to be changed to allow 15 foot front yards between Williamsburg Shopping Center and Ironbound Road. He outlined two choices: (1) no change – leave as a combination of General Business and Corridor Commercial land use (and B-3 and B-2 zoning); or (2) change to a consistent Corridor Commercial land use, implemented by B-2 zoning.

It was the consensus of the Commission that this area should be changed to a consistent Corridor Commercial land use, implemented by B-2 zoning.

#### Monticello Avenue from Richmond Road to Treyburn Drive

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as General Business land use from Richmond Road to the southern property lines of the Monticello and Williamsburg

Shopping Centers, and is zoned B-3 from Richmond Road to Mt. Vernon Avenue (except for the Williamsburg Community Hospital Heliport, which is zoned LB-4. He suggested changing to Corridor Commercial land use to match the change recommended for Richmond Road. This would be implemented by B-2 zoning. He outlined two choices: (1) no change – leave as a General Commercial land use (B-3 zoning); or (2) change to Corridor Commercial land use to be consistent with the change to Richmond Road, implemented by B-2 zoning.

It was the consensus of the Commission that this area should be changed to a consistent Corridor Commercial land use, implemented by B-2 zoning.

#### Mooretown Road

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as Corridor Commercial land use, and zoned B-2. This area is separated from the rest of the City by the CSX Railroad, and is adjacent to property in James City County (M-1 Limited Business/Industrial zoning) and York County (Limited Business/General Business zoning). Architectural Review is required for this area, but is not required for the adjoining properties. The present residential uses are nonconforming. Mr. Nester suggested changing this area to General Commercial land use, implemented by B-3 zoning which would be more consistent with the surrounding James City County and York County zoning. He also suggested removing the Corridor Protection designation and not requiring architectural review, which is the case with the adjoining county properties. Mr. Nester outlined two choices: (1) no change – leave as Corridor Commercial land use (and B-2 zoning), and in a Corridor Protection district; or (2) change to General Commercial land use (implemented by B-3 zoning), and eliminate the Corridor Protection designation.

It was the consensus of the Commission that this area should be changed to General Commercial land use, implemented by B-3 zoning, and that the Corridor Protection designation should be eliminated.

#### Capitol Landing Road from Bypass Road to Merrimac Trail

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as Corridor Commercial land use, and zoned B-2 (except B-3 for DMV and the adjacent shopping center). The present land use category is appropriate for this corridor, as is the B-2 zoning (the DMV/shopping center area should be zoned B-2 to conform to the land use designation). He said that no changes are needed to the Corridor Commercial land use designation for this area, but suggested that the B-3 zoning at the DMV/shopping center be recommended for changing to B-2.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the Corridor Commercial designation for Capitol Landing Road should remain, and that the B-3 zoning at the DMV/shopping center should be recommended for change to B-2.

### Second Street area

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as General Business land use, and zoned B-3 (except for the RM-2 zoning recently approved for the Parkway Drive Condominiums). The present land use category is appropriate for this area, as is the B-3 zoning. Mr. Nester suggested that since this is the City's "automobile commercial" area, the Plan should recommend that the more intensive uses such as automobile sales and carwashes be permitted uses instead of special use permit uses.

Mr. Hertzler said that he was surprised that no one from the adjacent Wyndham Plantation was here. He said there are issues here similar to those on Richmond Road between Brooks Street and the Williamsburg Shopping Center. There are the nearby residential areas of Wyndham, Parkway Condominiums (approved but not constructed), Pinecrest, etc. that are affected by the intensity of commercial use in the area. He asked if Mr. Nester's proposal was the way to go, or whether the commercial aspect should be downplayed and residential uses encouraged.

Mr. Young said that you could argue that much of the damage has already been done.

Mr. Singley said that a residential/commercial mix is generally good, but that this area lends itself to more of a mixed use development – a possible mixture of offices and residential uses.

Mrs. Diehl said that the commercial is OK, but that more green buffers are needed behind the businesses.

Mr. Nester suggested that discussion of this area continue after the discussion of the residential component of commercial areas, and that we proceed to discuss the next two items on the agenda.

### York Street

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as Corridor Commercial land use, and zoned B-2. He said that the present land use category is appropriate for this corridor, as is the B-2 zoning, and that no changes are needed.

It was the consensus of the Commission that no changes were needed to this area.

### Jamestown Road/Route 199 intersection

Mr. Nester said that this area is now designated as General Commercial land use on the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners, and Office land use on the northeast corner. The zoning is B-2, which implements Corridor Commercial instead of General Commercial land use, and LB-4. He said that based on the existing uses at this intersection, the General Commercial land use should be changed to Corridor Commercial land use, which

is consistent with the existing B-2 zoning. The Office land use, and LB-4 zoning, is appropriate. Mr. Nester outlined two choices: (1) no change – leave as General Commercial and Office land use, but change the commercial zoning to the more intensive B-3 to correspond with the land use designation; or (2) change the commercial land use designation to Corridor Commercial and leave the commercial zoning as B-2, and keep the Office land use designation and LB-4 zoning for the northeast corner.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the commercial designation should be changed to Corridor Commercial, the zoning left as B-2, the Office land use designation be kept as well as the LB-4 zoning for the northeast corner (SunTrust, etc.).

### Residential Component of the Commercial Corridors

Mr. Nester noted that the 1998 Comprehensive Plan recommended that “since the Housing chapter has identified problems with the concentration of high density multifamily dwellings in the City, multifamily dwellings should be deleted as a permitted use.” He said that based on this recommendation, the B-2 and B-3 Districts were changed to only allow multifamily dwellings that were condominiums, and which occupied not more than 50% of the floor area of an individual building. He noted that no new multifamily dwelling units have been built in B-2 and B-3 areas since this change was made in 1998, and said that requests for more flexibility for multifamily dwellings have been made for both the Capitol Land Road corridor and the Second Street area. Mr. Nester said that this issue needs to be considered with the realization that the High Street and Riverside developments are proposing an additional 1,400 dwelling units, and that residential development in the B-2 and B-3 Districts would reduce the amount of land available for commercial use. He outlined the possible choices: (1) no change – leave the present condominium/no more than 50% floor area requirement in the B-2 and B-3 Districts. This will most likely result in no construction of multifamily dwellings in these districts; (2) allow multifamily dwellings at the present density of 14 units/net acre, occupying no more than 67% of the floor area of an individual building, with a special use permit. This would encourage more multifamily construction along the commercial corridors, but would preserve a commercial component for each lot developed as multifamily (a mixed use concept); or (3) allow multifamily dwellings and townhouses as a special use permit at the present density of 14 dwelling units per net acre, which could allow 100% of a B-2 or B-3 lot to be used for residential uses, with no commercial component. This option would also most likely be used on Capitol Landing Road and Penniman Road. There is also potential on Richmond Road for the vacant property behind Outback on Waltz Farm Drive. There is a potential for up to 590 new multifamily dwelling units along the commercial corridors with this option.

Mr. Kranbuehl expressed concern about the Southern Inn property, which was proposed for B-2 zoning. He said that allowing 100% of the property to be used for multifamily residential use is what the surrounding neighborhoods don't want to happen.

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Mrs. McBeth said that she doesn't want Capitol Landing Road to become another Merrimac Trail, and that it has a lot of potential for multifamily development if the regulations are changed.

Mr. Young said that in general terms, more flexibility is needed along Capitol Landing Road.

Mrs. McBeth suggested the need for more of a "middle-ground" solution.

Mr. Young said that more thought is needed, and that the shopping center area on Richmond Road and Monticello Avenue had a different character than the commercial corridors.

Mr. Kranbuehl suggested that the Southern Inn property be classified as Mixed Use with an LB-2 zoning.

It was the consensus of the Commission that discussion on this issue, and that of the Second Street area, be continued at a future work session.

The following work sessions were scheduled:

Monday, February 7, 6:30 p.m., Conference Room 3A, Williamsburg Municipal Building – discuss the Capital Improvement Plan and continue today's discussion on the Comprehensive Plan.

Monday, February 14, 4:00 p.m., Conference Room 3A, Williamsburg Municipal Building – discuss the proposed Riverside rezoning proposals.

## **OPEN FORUM**

Mr. Kranbuehl and Mrs. Diehl thanked the Commission for its work, and for allowing them to participate in today's work session discussions.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Jesse Young, Chairman  
Williamsburg Planning Commission